

Chapter 4

USAGE OF PLANTS TO PROVIDE INCLUSIVE DESIGN IN URBAN AREAS

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◆ Introduction

The contribution of plants, which are productive organism at the basis of the food chain, to our world in terms of ecosystem is very important. It is essential to protect plants that have many benefits for nature and to provide their effective use in urban areas. Recently, the changing nature's balance has caused unintended health problems (disease, epidemic, etc.). These problems have created more awareness for people about the importance of nature protection and sustainability. Realizing the importance of nature makes people desire to recognize plants and to contact with nature. The fact that people spend time indoors and cannot communicate with nature causes many psychological problems. With the understanding importance of green areas for people health, the habits of spending time in outdoors are increasing. According to the research, it has been indicated that regular physical activity in nature and being in contact with plants has a positive effect on people's mental health ⁽¹⁾. Researches also show that practices in urban parks improve people physically or spiritually and have a positive effect on human health ^(2,3). In this context, there is a need for inclusive planting design approaches that can enable people to integrate with nature by solving the problems in cities. The way we design urban areas and the decisions we make regarding land use will determine our connection with it in real life.

The inclusive design (universal design) approach, which offers accessible and usable environments by increasing the sustainability and livability of the cities, provides space or product design that serves all users, young, old, or who have limited physical and mental abilities, on an equal basis ⁽⁴⁾. This concept is an approach that is effective in solving the problems that develop with the conditions of our modern age and includes many issues. Inclusive design consideration should be taken into account in planting design as in the structural landscape design of the space. Green areas, which have an important contribution to the creation of healthy cities,

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These criteria, which are created for the use of plants that support inclusive design, will propose a model for design guides and increase the livability in cities. The study also contributes to the development of inclusive and healthy cities with these practices and suggestions for the use of plants in urban areas.

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